

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

Address delivered before the East Middlesex Teachers' Institute, Oct. 23rd, 1880.—

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(Condensed for School Magazine.)

MR. President and fellow teachers : In calling your attention to School Discipline I have purposely omitted reading a paper on the subject, but have preferred addressing you in a conversational style, for I have noticed, in my connection with teachers' institutes, that when a paper entering into the details of the subject has been presented, the discussion generally ceases with the reading of the essay ; whereas, a less formal introduction, has a tendency to draw out the opinions of the teachers, and the result is an amount of practical knowledge not otherwise obtained. This subject is one that is well adapted for a general discussion, it is one in which every teacher is interested, it is one which enters into the duties of every school day, and if my remarks are not followed by a general discussion, then the object I have in view will not have been fully accomplished. I have, to a certain extent, systematized my remarks in order to assist your memories and enlist your attention.

School Discipline embraces not only the maintenance of order, the subordination of the pupils to authority, their prompt obedience, their quiet and uniform movements, their application to study, and other features of mechanical school drill, but it includes a suitable arrangement of classes and rotation of studies, so as to secure a change of posture for the pupils, and a variety of exercises for their minds, thus resting, without loss of time, their physical and mental natures ; it embraces the methods of

teaching, a systematic rotation of examinations, the cleanliness, ventilation and adornment of the school-room, and a scheme of appropriate rewards and penalties.

The subject in its extended sense is so comprehensive, that time forbids taking it up in its widest meaning ; I will, therefore, confine my remarks to it in its restricted sense—the maintenance of order, the prompt obedience and uniform movements of the pupils.

I. I will first refer to the importance of discipline under the alliterative heads, *Essential, Elevating, and Enduring.*

(a) It is *Essential* or necessary. I cannot conceive how a teacher can successfully impart instruction, manifest a pleasant disposition, or win the esteem of the pupils, unless discipline is strictly, though kindly, enforced. I cannot conceive how pupils can diligently and satisfactorily apply themselves to study, unless an air of quietness and studiousness pervade the school-room. The buoyant, enthusiastic natures of the children, their natural disinclination to concentrate their energies on their studies, will certainly lead to inattention, and very much retard their progress, unless the reins of authority be held with a firm though gentle grasp.

It is *Essential* as a time-saver. We all know as individuals that we can do more work and do it better by having some systematic method of procedure ; now, if this principle has force with respect to individuals, it has much greater force with respect to